



City of Chelsea

Boards, Committees and Commissions Handbook

A Guide for Citizens Appointed by the Mayor and City Council

Updated March 1, 2021

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Introduction

Thank you for volunteering to serve your community through an appointment by the Mayor and City Council to a citizen board, committee, or commission. This handbook is designed to provide you with information regarding your role and responsibilities as a member.

Boards, committees, and commissions are established to increase citizen input and participation in City government. Some of the boards, committees and commissions exist to advise and make recommendations to City Council, while others have distinct regulatory responsibilities that are established by law.

By accepting this appointment, you are now in a position to work directly with your local government, on behalf of your fellow citizens, to enrich community life on a wide variety of issues. The greater your participation in the work of the board, committee, or commission, the greater will be the effectiveness of that body in carrying out its charge and ultimately improving the community.

While the Mayor and City Council set policy and make decisions affecting their constituency, they also consider citizen participation a vital aspect of good government. Working in partnership with the Mayor and City Council, City staff, and your fellow citizens, we can continue to set the standards for excellence in good government and quality of life.

Qualifications

Appointees to boards, committees, and commissions shall be a current resident of City of Chelsea unless otherwise specified or provided for by law, ordinance, or City Council action establishing the board, committee or commission, or in the rules or by-laws of that board, committee or commission, if approved by City Council.

Some boards, commissions and committees have additional qualifications specific to that body and include:

- Board of Review members shall be a qualified elector of the city, and shall have been a resident of the city for at least one (1) year immediately prior to the date of appointment.
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA) board members must be a resident or own or operate a business in the DDA district.

Qualifications and responsibilities specific to a certain board, committee or commission can be found on the City website at: www.city-chelsea.org, using the Quick Link in the upper right-hand corner for Boards, Committees & Commissions.

An oath of office is required for some boards, committees, and commissions. Where applicable, newly appointed board members will take and sign an oath of office following their appointment. In these cases, the new member may not vote on any matter until the oath of office has been administered. Reappointed members shall also be administered the oath of office, if applicable.

The City of Chelsea does not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.

General Roles & Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities listed below are general guidelines. It is important that dialogue take place between the members, chairpersons, and staff on how the specific board can function at its optimum. The members and chairperson of a board serve as advisors to the Mayor and City Council and receive their charge from the Mayor and City Council. The staff is an employee of the City, with other core job responsibilities, and is accountable to their Department Head and/or City Manager. Responsibilities clearly defined by the chairperson and staff will make the board and its work more effective.

- It is important for every member to be aware of the time, energy, and commitment that is involved in being part of a board.
- The majority of work of the board is accomplished at meetings. Therefore, all members in attendance contribute to the most effective work plan.
- A member must notify the chairperson and the staff support person if he/she cannot attend a meeting.
- Members may be asked by the chairperson to complete specific tasks which may include serving on subcommittees.
- Every member contributes to the problem-solving process.
- All members are required to vote on recommendations and actions of the group unless a potential conflict of interests exists.
- In order for the board, committee and commission to provide the most comprehensive information to the Mayor and City Council, each member works in the spirit of compromise and negotiation in order to reach consensus when possible.
- Members are asked to keep up-to-date on information relating to board interest areas.
- Members shall not represent their individual views through any contacts they have with the media as being representative of the board, committee or commission unless that body has formally taken a position on the matter.

Compensation

Membership to a board, committee or commission is typically without compensation with exception to the following:

- Board of Review members are paid \$50 per ½ day of service (4 or less hours) and \$100 per 1 day of service (more than 4 hours).
- Planning Commission members are compensated \$25 per meeting attended.
- Zoning Board members are compensated \$25 per meeting attended.

Members may be paid through the City payroll system or accounts payable system based on IRS requirements for that type of position. Members paid through the City payroll system will be required to complete an I-9 as well as federal and state tax withholding forms.

Paid members have the option of receiving a live check mailed to their home address or having payment deposited directly to a preferred bank account. Please request a direct deposit form from the City staff if interested that option.

The City processes checks twice monthly so there will be a lag between the date of the meeting a member attended and their receipt of payment. Please contact the City Offices during regular business hours for assistance in determining a payment date, as needed.

Code of Conduct

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. The successful operation and reputation of City of Chelsea boards, commissions, and committees is built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of members. Integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity. Failure to abide by these rules may result in removal from the board.

The City of Chelsea's board, committee and commission standards include the following:

- Adhering firmly to a code of sound values
- Attending and preparing for meetings faithfully
- Acting in a manner that maintains integrity and independence, yet being responsive to the interests and needs of those they represent
- Obeying all laws applicable to their official actions.
- Using independent judgment to pursue the common good
- Presenting opinions to all in a reasonable, forthright, consistent manner
- Remaining incorruptible, self-governing, and unaffected by improper influence while at the same time being able to consider the opinions and ideas of others
- Treating other members and the public with dignity and respect
- Honoring the opinions of others even when in disagreement with other members of the body
- Understanding and supporting of the body's mission and overall direction
- Taking pride in the City of Chelsea and your role as a board, committee or commission member
- Being flexible, innovative, and responsive to change

Communications

(City Council Motion 03/01/21)

1. Board, Commission and Committee Members shall adhere to the City's Social Media Policy; and
2. Official communications of the City and its Boards, Commissions and Committees shall be written in conjunction with and issued by City administration.

Conduct

(City Council Motion 03/01/21)

The following policies supplement the City's Charter, Ordinances, and Oath of Office:

- Full Disclosure
 1. A Board, Commission, or Committee Member in the performance of his/her public duties shall not act upon any matter in which s/he has a material financial interest, or where s/he has a legal or fiduciary duty to another organization or entity or personal relationship that may give the appearance of a conflict of interest, without disclosing the full nature and extent of the interest to the other members of the Board, Commission, or Committee on the official record. Such disclosure must be made before the time to perform his/her duty. The Board, Commission, or Committee Member shall not engage in any substantive discussion of or vote on the matter prior to making the required disclosure.
 2. A Board, Commission, or Committee Member shall disclose on the official record any affiliation or membership with any organization that appears before or is actively involved in a matter pending before the Board, Commission, or Committee. Such disclosure must be made before the time to perform his/her duty. The Board, Commission, or Committee Member shall not engage in any substantive discussion of or vote on the matter prior to making the required disclosure.
 3. The disclosures required by this subsection shall not supplant, but instead shall supplement, any disclosure of a personal, contractual, financial, business, employment, or pecuniary interest required by state statute or city ordinance.
- Advocacy:
 1. Board, Commission, or Committee Members shall represent the official policies or positions of the City to the best of their ability. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, Board, Commission, or Committee Members shall state that any such opinions or positions are solely their own and neither state nor imply that they represent the opinions or positions of the City of Chelsea.
- Compliance with the Law: City Board, Commission, and Committee Members shall comply with both the spirit and letter of the laws of the United States, the State of Michigan, and the City of Chelsea in the performance of their duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and Michigan constitutions; the Charter of the City of Chelsea, state and federal statutes; and City ordinances and policies. Board, Commission, and Committee Members must adhere and follow all laws and not act outside the scope of their defined authority.
- Honesty: Board, Committee, and Commission members shall act in good faith and shall not misrepresent facts, laws, or processes where such is ascertainable and/or verifiable.